

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 were pending in the present application. Claims 1-3 and 10-12 have been cancelled. Claims 4 and 13 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 4-9 and 13-18 are now pending in the present application.

Claims 4-7 and 13-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten independent form. The Applicant has rewritten claims 4 and 13 into independent form including all of the limitations of the respective preceding claims.

Claims 1, 8, 10, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Melvin et al. (U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0069920) (hereinafter ‘Melvin’). The Applicant believes the rejection to now be moot in view of the amendments to the claims.

Claims 2, 3, 11, 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Melvin in view of Mihara et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,998,027) (hereinafter ‘Mihara’). The Applicant believes the rejection to now be moot in view of the amendments to the claims.

Claims 9 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Melvin. The Applicant believes the rejection to now be moot in view of the amendments to the claims.

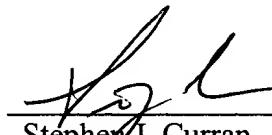
Applicant believes claims 4 and 13, along with their respective dependent claims, to patentably distinguish over Melvin and over Melvin in view of Mihara.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge said fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert, & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505/5500-71600/SJC.

Respectfully submitted,



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